

UNIT OVERVIEW

Course Name: Philanthropy and Social Studies
Unit Title: Philanthropy^{3/4} Individuals and Their Surroundings
Grade Level: 3rd – 5th Grades

Overview:

This unit is focused on the idea that every person is not only an individual, but also a member of the various groups that make up our society. The unit is structured to first discuss and analyze the concept of groups of people as different types of “*communities*.” The second lesson examines diversity as it creates groups with particular identifying characteristics, or *factions*. Building trust, or “*community capital*,” between groups is explored as it relates to facilitating solutions when differences arise. The fourth lesson is intended to illustrate that “government” is not an ambiguous group of laws, buildings, or faceless people, but rather that “*government*” in the United States of America is actually the sum total of all of its people.

National Content Standards:

<http://www.ncss.org/standards/home.html>

Michigan Content Standards and Benchmarks:

Lesson One: SOC.II.1.LE.2
Lesson Two: SOC.VI.1.LE.2
Lesson Three: SOC.V.1.LE.1
Lesson Four: SOC.III.4.LE.4

Philanthropy Theme(s):

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|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| • Philanthropy and Civil Society | PHIL.II.PCS05.E.5
PHIL.II.PCS05.E12 | PHIL.II.PCS05.E7
PHIL.II.PCS05.E.13 |
| • Philanthropy and the Individual | PHIL.III.PI01.E.8 | |

Unit Purpose:

The purpose of this unit is to help students understand that each of them is an important and potentially influential member of American society.

Unit Objectives:

The learner will:

- explain that s/he is a member of several “*communities*” and give examples of some of the communities to which s/he belongs.
- identify differing groups as “*factions*.”
- give examples of how “*community capital*” between groups can help solve problems when differences arise.
- demonstrate the importance of participating in an election.

Experiential Component:

Optional experiences of interacting with people from differing communities are suggested in *Lesson Three: Whom Do You Trust?*

Time:

Seven or Eight Forty-Five to Sixty-Minute Class Periods.

Lesson Titles:

1. Individuals and Their Communities
2. Factions
3. Whom Do You Trust?
4. “We, The People...”

Unit Assessment:

Each individual lesson has its own assessment.

School/Home Connection:

The students will be studying a Social Studies unit called *Philanthropy^{3/4}Individuals and Their Surroundings*. Students will learn about the various communities in which they participate, explore ways in which groups may differ, and examine ideas that facilitate problem solving and cooperation between groups. Finally, the students will participate in a voting simulation and discover their importance as members of American society.

Michigan Curriculum Framework:

Strand	Standard	Benchmark
Lesson One:		
SOC. II. Geographic Perspective	1. People, Places & Cultures	LE. 2. Locate and describe diverse kinds of communities and explain the reasons for their characteristics and locations.
Lesson Two:		
SOC. VI. Public Discourse & Decision Making	1. Identifying and Analyzing Issues	LE. 2. Explain how a particular public issue became a problem and why people disagree about it.
Lesson Three:		
SOC. V. Inquiry	1. Information Processing	LE. 1. Locate information about local, state and national communities using a variety of traditional sources, electronic technologies, and direct observations.
Lesson Four:		
SOC. III. Civic Perspective	4. American Government & Politics	LE. 4. Describe how citizens participate in election campaigns.

Philanthropy Theme Framework:

Strand	Standard	Benchmark
Lesson One:		
PHIL II. Philanthropy and Civil Society	PCS05. Philanthropy and Government	E. 7. Describe why the classroom, school, or neighborhood is a community.
Lesson Two:		
PHIL II. Philanthropy and Civil Society	PCS05. Philanthropy and Government	E. 12. Identify the idea of factions in society.
Lesson Three:		
PHIL II. Philanthropy and Civil Society	PCS05. Philanthropy and Government	E. 13. Offer examples of community capital in school.
PHIL III. Philanthropy and the Individual	PI01. Reasons for Individual Philanthropy	E. 8. Recognize the concept of community capital in the classroom.
Lesson Four:		
PHIL II. Philanthropy and Civil Society	PCS05. Philanthropy and Government	E. 5. Discuss the relationship between individual freedom and government power in a democracy.

Lesson Developed and Piloted by:

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McMillan Elementary School
Muskegon, Michigan

Course Name: Philanthropy and Social Studies
Unit Title: Philanthropy^¾ Individuals and Their Surroundings
Lesson Title: Lesson One: Individuals and Their Communities
Grade Level: 3rd – 5th Grades
Duration: One Forty-Five to Sixty-Minute Class Period

National Content Standards:

<http://www.ncss.org/standards/home.html>

Michigan Content Standards and Benchmarks:

SOC.II.1.LE.2

Philanthropy Theme(s):

Philanthropy and Civil Society PHIL.II.PCS05.7

Purpose:

Students will understand the concept of “*community*” as it relates to membership in the classroom, school, or neighborhood.

Objectives:

The learner will:

- identify and define the concept of “*community*.”
- evaluate and explain why their classroom, school, or neighborhood is a community.
- cite examples of other types of communities.
- use the vocabulary describing community characteristics.

Experiential Component:

None for this lesson.

Materials:

- Posterboard or heavy poster paper
- Markers and pencils
- Writing and drawing paper
- “Sticky Notes”
- Unruled 5 x 9” index cards
- *School/Home Connection Interview* (see **Attachment One**)

Instructional Procedure(s):

Anticipatory Set:

Taking one item at a time, ask students together to name their continent, country, state and city. Ask students if they can go any further down than the city to name the community of which they are a part. Tell them they are part of many other communities which will be discovered in today's lesson.

- Place two large posters on the bulletin board. One has the definition of **community** (*a group of people with common interests and likes*). The other has only the word **community** at the top or in the center. Give each student a sticky note and ask each student to draw an icon (one-minute drawing) showing what they might see, hear, or feel in a community. Call on each student to briefly explain his/her icon and place the sticky note on the *Community Poster*.
- Put up the 5 x 9 word cards or a poster with the following words:
 - **sharing** - *dividing or distributing portions*
 - **caring** - *showing interest or concern*
 - **trust** - *confidence or faith in a person or thing*
 - **interdependence** - *depending on one another; mutual dependence*
 - **common resources** - *resources that are not owned, but left open for free use by all*

Ask students to come up individually and choose a sticky note that is not their own to place under the word that it best depicts. As students place their sticky notes, they will need to explain with a sentence what it tells about the icon, where it will be placed, and why, e.g., “*I will place this picture of _____ under _____ because it shows _____.*” If some of the word cards have few or no icons placed with them, have the class brainstorm and create a few more sticky note pictures that best depict the word cards.

- Divide students into six cooperative groups of four to six students. Give each group a picture of one of the following: children in the classroom, spectators at a football game, a Boy Scout troop, a beach full of people, a sports team, and a family at the dinner table. (Pictures may be photographs or cut from books, popular magazines, or the newspaper.) Each group will be given five minutes to decide whether or not their picture shows an example of a community and use the words from the previous activity to defend their decisions. Each group must present its findings by choosing one person to speak for the group. The teacher needs to be a facilitator here, correcting misconceptions that may occur.

Assessment:

Give each student a piece of drawing paper and writing paper. On the drawing paper, the student should draw and color a picture of a community. On the writing paper, the student should write one complete paragraph to explain his or her picture. The topic sentence will be provided by the teacher: “*This picture shows a community of.....*” Students should complete the paragraph by adding supporting details. Details will need to include the definition of community and at least two of the terms that describe a community (as well as support for the choice of that term).

Criteria:

1. The picture must show a type of community.
2. The picture must be complete (fully colored, no blank spaces).
3. The topic sentence must be the one provided.
4. The paragraph must include at least three supporting detail sentences.
5. The definition of “community” can be paraphrased, but must be in agreement with the definition given in this lesson.
6. Two of the identifying characteristics must appear in the picture and be defended in print.

Rubric (0-4 points)

- 4 - Meets all of the six criteria above
- 3 - Meets four or five of the above criteria
- 2 - Meets three of the above criteria
- 1 - Meets two of the above criteria
- 0 - Meets one or none of the criteria above.

School/Home Connection:

Students will be asked to interview an adult and fill out the *School/Home Connection Interview* (see **Attachment One**).

Extension:

If desired, a bulletin board may be developed. Students could bring in pictures that illustrate various communities. The definition and the terms that identify a community could also be added.

Bibliographical References:

None for this lesson.

Michigan Curriculum Framework:

Strand	Standard	Benchmark
SOC. II. Geographic Perspective	1. People, Places & Cultures	LE. 2. Locate and describe diverse kinds of communities and explain the reasons for their characteristics and locations.

Philanthropy Theme Framework:

Strand	Standard	Benchmark
PHIL. II. Philanthropy and Civil Society	PCS05. Philanthropy and Government	E. 7. Describe why the classroom, school, or neighborhood is a community.

Lesson Developed and Piloted by:

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McMillan Elementary
Muskegon, Michigan

Attachment One
Lesson One: Individual and Community

School/Home Connection Interview

Directions: Students are to complete the top portion at school, then complete the bottom part at home. Be sure to have the adult write his/her own initials at the bottom of the page.

Name of student: _____

(Use your own words, please.)

A **community** * is _____

Complete the section below at home:

(Note: Students are expected to interview the adult and fill in the following.)

Pick a church, charitable organization, workplace to which you belong:

Do you feel your selection above is an example of a * **community**? _____

Why or why not? _____

Initials of adult participant _____

Course Name: Philanthropy and Social Studies
Unit Title: Philanthropy^¾ Individuals and Their Surroundings
Lesson Title: Lesson Two: Factions
Grade Level: 3rd – 5th Grades
Duration: Two to Three Forty-Five to Sixty-Minute Class Periods

National Content Standards:

<http://www.ncss.org/standards/home.html>

Michigan Content Standards and Benchmarks:

SOC.VI.1.LE2

Philanthropy Theme(s):

Philanthropy and Civil Society PHIL.II.PCS05.E.12

Purpose:

Students will identify factions in society and recognize the problems/dangers/benefits of factional activities and/or fighting.

Objectives:

The learner will:

- define “**faction.**”
- explain the cause of “factions.”
- identify an example of “factions” in current world events.
- cite problems/dangers created by “factional fighting.”
- predict at least one benefit of “factional” activities.

Experiential Component:

None for this lesson.

Materials:

- *The Butter Battle Book*, by Dr. Suess
- “One Tin Soldier” (recording and printed lyrics)
- Unruled 5 x 9” cards
- *Index Cards (Attachment One)*
- *Game: Dividing Into Groups (Attachment Two)*
- *Simulation Game (Attachment Three)*
- *Assessment (Attachment Four)*

Materials (Continued):

- Lined paper/drawing paper
- Pencils, crayons, markers, etc. (writing/drawing tools)
- Badges (see **Attachment Three** for directions)

Instructional Procedure(s):

Anticipatory Set:

*Divide the class into six cooperative groups of four-six students. Give each group an index card with three groups of people listed on it. See Index Cards (**Attachment One**). Each cooperative group must decide if the groups of people on their cards are communities, then explain why or why not.*

- Read *The Butter Battle Book* aloud to the class, and then facilitate a discussion on the following questions:
 - *What happened to the community in this book?*
 - *Why did this happen?*
 - *What was the difference of opinion about?*
 - *What was the result?*
- Use the results of this discussion to lead to the introduction of the term **faction** (a group with a common interest that is often quarrelsome or self-seeking). This definition should be written on a card and posted, along with the definition of **community** (from previous lesson).
- Using *Game: Dividing Into Groups* (see **Attachment Two**), play a game to divide the class into factions.
- Second Class Period: Part of this lesson is to be taught in one segment (early in the day), and will need to be completed and assessed at the end of the day.

Give each student a copy of the lyrics to a story that has been made into a song “*One Tin Soldier*.” Instruct students to read along as the song is played. After hearing the song (once or twice, depending on the ability of the class), ask comprehension questions, such as:

- *What happened to the community in this song?*
- *Why did this happen?*
- *What are these groups called? (factions)*
- *What was the result?*
- *Does this happen in “real life?”*

Instructional Procedure(s) [Continued]:

- *What are some examples? (race relations in the United States, religious differences in Northern Ireland, ethnic differences in Yugoslavia, tribal differences in Rwanda, older people/younger people, etc.)*
Teacher Note: Students may be unfamiliar with some of these situations. If necessary, take time at this point to study some current or historical events.
- *Can any good things come from the activity of factions? What?*
- Have students take part in *Simulation Game* (see **Attachment Three**).

Assessment:

Give each student a copy of *Assessment* (see **Attachment Four**), a questionnaire that asks them to identify their feelings during the simulation. The questionnaire will also ask students to predict possible outcomes (if the simulation continued) and discuss some potential dangers, problems, or benefits of factional activities.

School/Home Connection

Students (with adult assistance) can search for articles in periodicals (newspapers, magazines, etc.) that report examples of factional activities. These may be brought to school and posted on a bulletin board and/or read aloud or summarized by the students.

Extension:

Students can do additional research on an example of factional activities in historic or current events. These could be published as written or oral reports and/or pictures.

Bibliographical References:

- Dr. Seuss, Theodore Seuss Geisel. *The Butter Battle Book*. Econo-Clad Books, 1999. ISBN: 0881034215.
- “One Tin Soldier” available on *Super Hits of the 70s: Have a Nice Day*, Vol. 7. Catalog Number: 70927. UPC: 81227092726. Format: CD (Cassette available). Release date: April 4, 1990, Rhino Records.

Michigan Curriculum Framework:

Strand	Standard	Benchmark
SOC. VI. Public Discourse & Decision Making	1. Identifying and Analyzing Issues	LE. 2. Explain how a particular public issue became a problem and why people disagree about it.

Philanthropy Theme Framework:

Strand	Standard	Benchmark
PHIL II. Philanthropy and Civil Society	PCS05. Philanthropy and Government	E. 12. Identify the idea of factions in society.

Lesson Developed and Piloted by:

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Attachment One

Lesson Two: Factions

Index Cards

Using six 5 x 9 (unruled) index cards, write the names of three groups on each card. Three cards will be groups that ***are*** examples of communities and three groups will be examples that are ***not*** communities. (These cards are to be used with this lesson's *Anticipatory Set* under **Instructional Procedures**.)

Groups that ***are*** communities:

Card One – Boy Scouts, Girls Scouts, 4-H Club

Card Two – Mickey Mouse Club, Sesame Street, Mister Rogers Neighborhood

Card Three – New York Yankees, Detroit Red Wings, Chicago Bulls

Groups that are ***not*** communities:

Card Four – baseball team, golfer, tennis player

Card Five – fans at a football game, shoppers in a store, patients waiting at a Doctor's office

Card Six – passengers on a bus, people at Pizza Hut, visitors at Disney World

Attachment Two Lesson Two: Factions

Game: Dividing Into Groups

1. Designate two (or possibly three) separate locations within the classroom. An easy way to do this is to designate the north wall, the south wall, and the center of the room.
2. Announce choices by which the students can classify themselves, for example, *“Everyone who prefers chocolate ice cream, go stand by the North wall; everyone who prefers vanilla, go stand by the South wall.”* (Children should be encouraged to make a “forced choice” of one or the other.) Children who have special circumstances may remain in the center, for example: *“Anyone with allergies to ice cream...”*
3. Announce other categories and tell children they must move each time to the location that signifies their choice. These categories may be created by the teacher, according to the population of the class.

Examples of categories:

Boys – Girls

Only children – Have brothers and/or sisters

Like cats best – Like dogs best

Tall – Short

Favorite food is pizza – Favorite food is something else

Like country music – Do not like country music

Wear glasses – Do not wear glasses

(These are just examples. The possibilities are endless. Adjust categories to the makeup of your class.)

4. Tell children to return to their own seats at the end of this activity.
5. Briefly close/process this activity with this statement to elicit a student response.
“Today we have divided up into many groups of people according to what we believe, or how we look, what we prefer, or who we are. Did you notice that sometimes certain people were in your group and other times there were different people in your group? Groups changed, depending on the question that was asked. These small groups that were formed could be called _____?” (factions)

Attachment Three Lesson Two: Factions

Simulation Game

Note: Once begun, this game will be continued throughout the day, at the discretion of the teacher. At a given point, the students must change roles and then finish the simulation as the “other” faction.

Preparation: Make two sets of badges from construction paper that obviously contrast. Make one set of circles in one color (with “smiley” faces) and another set in a different color (with “frowning” faces.) Laminate these, if you wish. Have enough of one kind of badge for approximately half of the class and enough of the other for the remainder of the class.

Conceal the badges in an opaque container. Mix by shaking. Allow each student to draw one badge (without looking) and wear the badge on the right shoulder. Masking tape will work especially well, if the circles are laminated.

As soon as all students are wearing their badges, begin immediately to give preferential treatment to one set of students. Examples may include giving a candy treat to everyone with a “smiley” face, allowing them to line up first, giving them extra recess. The group with the “frowning” faces should be plainly discriminated against, such as, no drinks for those with frowning faces, no candy, last in line, etc. This should continue for a portion of the day, at the teacher’s discretion.

When the teacher decides that the class is ready to change roles, each student with a “smiley” badge must trade with a student who has a “frowning” badge. (You may want to have some extras on hand, in case they become too worn out or lost.)

Resume preferential treatment of the students with “smiley” faces, as well as discrimination against those with the “frowning” faces. **Important Note:** *All* students *must* have reversed roles.

Continue in this manner throughout the day, while teaching other lessons and doing other activities. As you near the end of the day, allow enough time for the students to complete the processing questionnaire/assessment (see **Attachment Four**).

Attachment Four Lesson Two: Factions

Assessment

Each student must complete the questionnaire in an intrapersonal (self-smart) manner. He or she may not confer with others while working on this portion of the lesson.

1. When I was wearing a “smiley” badge, I felt _____

because _____

2. When I was wearing a “frowning” badge, I felt _____

because _____

3. A “*faction*” is (definition) _____

If the game had continued longer, one bad result of factional fighting might have been _____

If the game had continued longer, one good result of factional activity might have been _____

Course Name: Philanthropy and Social Studies
Unit Title: Philanthropy: Individuals and Their Surroundings
Lesson Title: Lesson Three: Whom Do You Trust?
Grade Level: 3rd – 5th Grades
Duration: Two Forty-Five to Sixty-Minute Class Periods

National Content Standards:

<http://www.ncss.org/standards/home.html>

Michigan Content Standards and Benchmarks:

SOC.V.1.LE.1

Philanthropy Theme(s):

- Philanthropy and Civil Society PHIL.II.PCS05.E.13
- Philanthropy and the Individual PHIL.III.PI01.E.8

Purpose:

Students will describe the concept of “*community capital*.”

Objectives:

The learner will:

- define “*community capital*.”
- cite an example of “community capital.”
- illustrate “community capital” in the classroom.

Experiential Component:

See **Extension Activities** for possible activities.

Materials:

- Photographs
- *Whom Do You Trust?* (**Attachment One**)
- Writing and drawing materials
- Ruled index cards

Instructional Procedure(s):

Anticipatory Set:

*Ask students to pair off and define the word “**trust**.” (to place confidence in)
Have teams report their definitions.*

Instructional Procedure(s) [Continued]:

- Note: The teacher will need to obtain several (8-10) photographs and/or magazine pictures showing various groups of individuals that will be both widely familiar and unfamiliar to the students. It is a good idea to have half of the pictures that are actual photographs of groups of people known to the students, such as a picture of the teaching staff, a class picture, perhaps the high school football team, parents from the Parent Teacher Organization, etc. The other half need to be photos of unfamiliar groups, which might include a group of seniors in a nursing/retirement facility, a group of handicapped people, class pictures of students from obviously different racial or ethnic groups, etc. Depending on your location, this will vary somewhat. Post pictures in random order on a bulletin board. Label the pictures A, B, C, etc. It is best to put the pictures up (without comment) a day or so in advance of the lesson.
- **Day One:** Ask students to name each group (they can create their own names for the unfamiliar pictures) and then ask them to respond to the questions on *Whom Do You Trust?* (see **Attachment One**). Allow ten minutes for naming the groups. It is a good idea to allow the students to move freely about while completing this assignment. Impromptu conversations will naturally occur that will facilitate later development of the lesson.
- After the worksheets are completed, arrange the students in groups of four to six to discuss the worksheet. Each student should be given an opportunity to share his/her responses in this small, cooperative group. Again, it is a good idea to time this activity. Allow about two minutes for each student in the group. The total time should be no more than ten to twelve minutes.
- Bring the entire class together as a group for a teacher-directed discussion. Be sure to lead the class in the direction of the following conclusion: People tend to trust others who they know or who appear to be like themselves. Examples of discussion questions might be:
 - *How do we decide whom to trust?*
 - *Why do we tend to distrust certain people?*
 - *Under what conditions could someone learn to trust another person who is different from them?*
- Closure - Each student will refer to their worksheet, finding the group that was rated the least likely to be trusted. Using index cards, students will be asked to write two or three sentences, or a brief paragraph, in which they create a fictitious scenario that will allow them to become familiar with a person or persons in the photo they selected. These will be collected by the teacher.

Instructional Procedure(s) [Continued]:

- **Day Two:** Select three to five examples from the index cards completed on day one. These are to be read aloud to the class. In selecting the cards to read, the teacher should consider those examples that would be most likely to occur in the lives of the students. Solicit student comments about the suggestions. Encourage students to respond by relating similar situations they have actually encountered, read about, or seen on television, in films, etc.
- Post a sign with the words “*community capital*” written on it and give the class the following definition: banked good will between groups of people that help solve problems. (It is a good idea to point out that this is the opposite of “*factions*.”) Ask students if there is such a thing as community capital. Is it in the school? Solicit examples from students. If there is such a thing as community capital between groups, how does it work to solve problems?

Assessment:

Ask students to draw and color a picture showing an example of community capital in their classroom. If students are not physically capable or prefer not to draw, they may find a photograph in a book or periodical. Students may then write one or two sentences telling why their picture is an example of community capital. Display these drawings. (If preferred, students could do this orally, instead of in writing.)

School/Home Connection:

None for this lesson.

Extension:

Any of the following activities that build community capital would be an appropriate extension to this lesson. Choosing an extension activity will be based on the amount of time and potential contacts available in your area.

- Arrange to have “pen-pals” with students from another part of the country or world. Have students share information and pictures telling about themselves and their own area. If Internet access is available, this can be done via e-mail.
- Arrange regular visits to a local retirement facility. It is often exciting for students to have “senior friends.” They can be paired up with a “buddy” for exchanging notes and pictures, or for reading and/or board games, etc.
- Arrange for students to be “reading buddies” with younger students or arrange for older students or community members to be reading buddies with them.
- Arrange or encourage activities with special needs students.
- Arrange for visitors from the community to come into the classroom and share their experiences with the students. Adults who have recently traveled and experienced different cultures, adults from differing ethnic/racial backgrounds, or adults who work with a specific segment of the community are good choices.

Bibliographical References:

None for this lesson.

Michigan Curriculum Framework:

Strand		Standard	Benchmark
SOC.	V. Inquiry	1. Information Processing	LE. 1. Locate information about local, state and national communities using a variety of traditional sources, electronic technologies, and direct observations.

Philanthropy Theme Framework:

Strand		Standard	Benchmark
PHIL	II. Philanthropy and Civil Society	PCS05. Philanthropy and Government	E. 13. Offer examples of community capital in school.
PHIL	III. Philanthropy and the Individual	PI01. Reasons for Individual Philanthropy	E. 8. Recognize the concept of community capital in the classroom.

Lesson Developed and Piloted by:

Sally Engleman
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Muskegon, Michigan

Attachment One
Lesson Three: Whom Do You Trust?

Whom Do You Trust?

Directions: *For each picture, name the group. Then put the groups in order, beginning with the group of people you would trust the **MOST**. End with the group of people you would trust the **LEAST**. Then answer the questions at the end. (You will have ten minutes.)*

Name the Groups	Order
A. _____	1. _____
B. _____	2. _____
C. _____	3. _____
D. _____	4. _____
E. _____	5. _____
F. _____	6. _____
G. _____	7. _____
H. _____	8. _____
I. _____	9. _____
J. _____	10. _____

Look at your choice for **#1** (*the group you trust the most*). Explain WHY you would trust these people the most.

Look at your **LAST** choice (*the group you trust the least*). Explain WHY you would trust these people the least.

Course Name: Philanthropy and Social Studies
Unit Title: Philanthropy^¾ Individuals and Their Surroundings
Lesson Title: Lesson Four: “*We, The People....*”
Grade Level: 3rd – 5th Grades
Duration: Two Forty-Five to Sixty-Minute Class Periods

National Content Standards:

<http://www.ncss.org/standards/home.html>

Michigan Content Standards and Benchmarks:

SOC.III.4.LE.4

Philanthropy Theme(s):

Philanthropy and Civil Society PHIL.II.PCS05.E.5

Purpose:

Students will explain that, in the United States, it is the people who hold the power, not the government.

Objectives:

The learner will:

- describe the importance of “the people” in American government.
- participate in a simulated voting experience.
- compare/contrast some aspects of life under voting and non-voting governments.

Experiential Component:

None for this lesson.

Materials:

- Facsimile of original U.S. Constitution
- Video—“*The Preamble*” (Schoolhouse Rock: America Rock, Walt Disney Videos)
- Clearly printed words to “*The Preamble*”
- *A Voting Experience* (**Attachment One**)
- *Sample Family Letter* (**Attachment Two**)
- Several (clean) empty cans with lids (coffee cans or Pringle’s potato chips)
- Writing and drawing materials
- Index cards
- “Sticky notes”

Materials (Continued):

- Poster board
- Books or film clips (non-democracy) - optional

Instructional Procedure(s):

Anticipatory Set: Display the facsimile of the U.S. Constitution in the classroom for a day or two prior to the lesson. Answer student questions that may occur. Then, play the video entitled, "The Preamble." Ask the students if the words are familiar. Guide them to recognize that these words are the beginning of the Constitution. Circulate copies of the words (one per student) and provide an opportunity for the students to sing along.

- **Day One:** After the students have become quite familiar with the Preamble song, direct their attention to the first three words on their copies: "*We, the People...*" Engage students in a discussion to determine the meaning of this phrase. (*In our country, we have the right to vote to make our own laws and choose our own leaders.*)
- In small cooperative groups of four to six, allow the students two or three minutes to explain (to each other) the meaning of, "*We, the People.*"
- To the entire group, pose the question, "*What would life be like if we did not have these rights?*" Also challenge the groups to see if they can think of other places in the world where some citizens do not have the right to vote. (Allow three to five minutes for discussion in small groups.)
- Bring the entire group together and solicit answers. For some classes, it may be necessary for the teacher to prompt the students somewhat, in order to guide them toward recognizing places where some people do not have voting rights.
- Pose the question, "*What if citizens in our country did not have the right to vote?*" Have students write their answers on sticky notes and draw icons to represent their words. At the close of the lesson, ask students to place their sticky notes on the poster board entitled, "*What If We Were Not Allowed To Vote?*" Leave this in a visible place until the next day.
- **Day Two:** Briefly read the students' answers (on the sticky notes) aloud to the class. Read, show pictures, or show brief film clips of situations in places where people are not allowed to vote. A good source of photographs to use can be found at www.civilrightsphotos.com.
- In small cooperative groups of four to six students, ask each group to create a brief commercial that shows the benefits of voting. Allow five to ten minutes for groups to prepare, then let each group perform their ad for the class.
- Introduce the voting simulation experience using *A Voting Experience* (see **Attachment One**).

Instructional Procedure(s) [Continued]:

- Closure: Following the election and purchase of the item, call the students into a community circle. (This can also be written.) Each student will be asked to finish the following sentences:
 - *One thing I learned from the activity was...*
 - *One thing I liked about this activity was...*
 - *One thing I wonder (about this) is...*

It is also very important during this discussion to make clear to students that in public elections in the U.S., each person is entitled to one vote **only** (one person-one vote), as opposed to as many times as they wish. One way to correlate this with the penny vote is to decide in advance that each penny will represent a certain number of registered voters. For example, one penny could equal ten people, or one hundred people, or whatever you feel is best for your class.

Assessment:

For most classrooms, it is recommended that the assessment be an informal one, based upon teacher observation of participation. For some classes/curriculum requirements, it may be desirable to have a vocabulary test (election, poll, campaign, etc.) or a test of concepts. (Explain the purpose of the *U.S. Constitution*, Why does the *Preamble* begin with “*We, the People*,” etc.)

School/Home Connection:

If you choose to do the voting simulation, it is advisable to send an explanatory note to parents. Use *Sample Family Letter* (see **Attachment Two**).

Extension:

An optional extension activity that could be done by a few students could be the making of “campaign posters” for the items that are being selected.

Bibliographical References:

- Video: *The Preamble*. Schoolhouse Rock: America Rock, 1997. ASIN: 1569494088.
- Helpful Web site: www.civilrightsphotos.com.

Michigan Curriculum Framework:

Strand	Standard	Benchmark
SOC. III. Civic Perspective	4. American Government & Politics	LE. 4. Describe how citizens participate in election campaigns.

Philanthropy Theme Framework:

Strand		Standard	Benchmark
PHIL	II. Philanthropy and Civil Society	PCS05. Philanthropy and Government	E. 5. Discuss the relationship between individual freedom and government power in a democracy.

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Attachment One
Lesson Four: “We, the People...”

A Voting Experience

1. Inform the class that they will have an opportunity to acquire a new game or play equipment for the class or to make a charitable contribution. As a class, ask students to brainstorm to create a list of preferred items to be purchased (or charities to which to contribute). The teacher should act as “secretary” and list ideas on poster paper.
2. Put the poster in a visible location in the classroom. At this time, the teacher should announce that a Primary Election will be held on the following day (or two). Explain that a primary election limits the final choices to two (or three, if desired).
3. For the Primary Election, give each student a blank (3 x 5) index card. Designate a ballot box (perhaps a manila envelope) in an accessible place in the classroom. Instruct students to write (on their index card) the name of the item or charity (from the list) that they prefer. Let students place their cards in the “ballot box.”
4. After the students vote, tabulate the results, noting the top two (or three, if desired) choices. Write the name and/or draw an icon of these choices on two (or three) index cards, then affix the cards to each of two (or three) cans. Be sure students cannot view contents. Display the cans in a prominent, accessible (yet secure) place in the classroom. (The top of the teacher’s desk is a good place.)
5. At this time announce that the students may vote for their favorite item by placing pennies in the can of their choice. (**Teacher note:** This activity is a simulation and the teacher may want to remind students that actual democratic elections are “one person / one vote.”) Prior to “Election Day” the students may campaign for their choice by using their own time (recess, lunch, before and after school) to create advertising posters or write a speech in support of their choice. They may request the opportunity to display their poster or address the class in their campaign, or challenge students with opposing views to a debate.
6. On Election Day (a specified date usually three or four days following), the polls will close at the end of the school day and the “votes” will be tabulated. All money will be used to purchase the item or make the charitable contribution that receives the most votes. (In general, the money accumulated will NOT be enough to pay for the cost of the item. Additional money may be accessed from classroom fund, PTO, or whatever is customary in your school.)
7. It is not absolutely necessary, but the students may enjoy counting the pennies and putting them into penny rolls. This is also an excellent opportunity to integrate a math lesson on graphing.
8. It is the responsibility of the teacher to see that the “winning” item is purchased and brought to school for the class or that the charitable contribution is delivered to the nonprofit agency. It is advisable to finalize the purchase or donation in as timely a manner as possible.

Attachment Two
Lesson Four: “*We, the People...*”

Sample Family Letter

Dear Family of _____,
(Student’s Name)

As part of our current Social Studies unit, our class is studying the concept of voting. In order to provide an authentic experience, we will be voting to select a new game or piece of play equipment for the classroom, or to make a charitable contribution.

In a Primary Election, the students have already decided that the two (three) items upon which they will be voting are:

In order to determine a “winner,” students will be doing a “penny vote.” This means that the students may bring in (only) pennies and place them in the jar of their choice. Each penny will equal one vote. Students may bring in as many pennies as they wish.

If possible, could you allow your son or daughter to do some extra chores (at home) this week to earn some extra pennies? The experience is generally more meaningful if the students have “earned” the money themselves.

Thank you so much for your cooperation,

Sincerely,
(Teacher’s Name)